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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/594,394	11/01/2006	Ralph Edmund Harris	117-603	9442
23117 7590 10/02/2009 NIXON & VANDERHYE, PC 901 NORTH GLEBE ROAD, 11TH FLOOR ARLINGTON, VA 22203				
EXAMINER				
FIGUEROA, JOHN J				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1796				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
10/02/2009		PAPER		

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

### Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/594,394

**Applicant(s)**

HARRIS ET AL.

**Examiner**

John J. Figueroa

**Art Unit**

1796

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 September 2009.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 40-74 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 40-74 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-893)
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Election/Restrictions***

1. Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

Group I, claim(s) 40-64 and 70-74, drawn to a process for disrupting a filter cake.

Group II, claim(s) 65-69, drawn to a drilling fluid.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, Applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

2. The inventions listed as Groups I and II do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: the process of disrupting a filter cake comprising using a polyester to form the filter cake and allowing it to hydrolyze in the presence of water to alter the structure of the filter cake (special technical feature) is well known in the art as evidenced by USPN 4,526,695 to Erbstoesser. (See, *e.g.*, Abstract; col. 1, lines 47 to col. 2, line 29; col. 2, line 57 to col. 3, line 21)

3. This application contains claims directed to more than one species of the generic invention. These species are deemed to lack unity of invention because they are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

The species are as follows:

- a. The process as recited in independent claim 40 further comprising a fluid displacement step wherein the displacing is caused by one of the following particular additive species.
    - i. Polymer breaker (claim 50) from the following species.
      - (1) Hydrolyzing enzyme (claims 51-53);
      - (2) Oxidant (claims 54-55)
    - ii. Ammonium bifluoride (claim 70).
    - iii. One of the following species for the filter cake disrupting agent as recited in claim 73.
      - (3) Acids;
      - (4) Esters and ester hydrolyzing enzymes; and
      - (5) Chelating agent.
  - b. The process further comprising incorporating a material into the solid polymer wherein said material is one of the following.
    - iv. Polymer breaker;
    - v. Specific gravity adjusting material;
    - vi. Calcium peroxide; and
    - vii. Ammonium bifluoride
4. Applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single species to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. The reply must also identify the claims readable on the elected species, including any claims

subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered non-responsive unless accompanied by an election.

**Applicant must therefore elect one of Group I or Group II** from the lack of unity discussed above in item 1 of the instant action.

In addition, **if Applicant elects Group I, Applicant must further elect from item 3** a single species for each of process species a; and a single species for process species b. That is, one species from i; ii; and iii for process species a; **and** one species from iv; v; vi; and vii for process species b.

Further, **if Applicant elects i; or iii; for process species a, Applicant must also elect** a single species from the corresponding species listed in (1) and (2) for i; or one species from (3) to (5) for iii; as listed above in item 3.

The claims are deemed to correspond to the species as listed above. The species are found in claims 49-59, 61, 64, 70, 72 and 73. The following claim(s) are generic: 40-48, 60, 62, 63, 71 and 74.

5. Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP §809.02(a).

6. The species listed above do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, the species lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: they are drawn to

distinct processes in oil field applications comprising distinct compounds having varying functions.

7. A telephone call was made to Leonard C. Mitchard on September 3, 2009 to request an oral election to the above restriction requirement, but did not result in an election being made.

8. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a species or invention to be examined even though the requirement may be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To preserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

9. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

### ***Conclusion***

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John J. Figueroa whose telephone number is (571)272-8916. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 8:00-6:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Seidleck can be reached on (571) 272-1078. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/John J. Figueroa/  
Examiner, Art Unit 1796

JJF/JS